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ABSTRACT

The paper reviews literature dealing with children's social and political development and examines how changing orientations in child development research relate to citizenship education. The paper is intended for use by elementary school educators as they develop and implement citizenship education and law-related education programs. The paper is presented in four major sections. Section I reviews research by Jean Piaget related to developmental stage characteristics. Section II focuses on social development. Topics discussed include children's social relations, dependence on adults, development of self-discipline, tolerance for others, and peer group influence. Section III explores the development of children's political views. Themes are adult influence, reasoning abilities, and children's conception of rights and roles vis-a-vis authority. Section IV considers implications of social and political development for curriculum planning and cites principles to aid citizenship education curriculum developers. These principles emphasize that curriculum should acknowledge children's social and political thinking as the medium for learning about community and society; help children gain generalized conceptions of group life; encourage children to interact and identify with adult models; and stimulate reasoning and discussion about political processes in the classroom and at state and national levels. (Author/DB)

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THINKING IN CHILDREN:

IMPLICATIONS FOR LAW-RELATED EDUCATION

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PROLOGUE

Episode One

> A few weeks ago I was at the local supermarket to replenish the family food supply. Ours had been exhausted during The Great Storm. Two little guys skimmed around the corner of the aisle and positioned themselves behind the Ritz Cracker display carton. Their motions were attuned to each other, knowing the game, yet sharing in its creation. From the corner of my eye I watched as they leveled their finger-guns at this basic citizen. I resisted a counteroffense and remained poised. An argument erupted between them: "No! There needs to be more robbers before you need more cops. So you be the robber and then we'll both be cops!" I moved on, pleased by the durability of this familiar game, admiring the logic and negotiating skill of these two supermarket ruffians.

The episode is wonderfully commonplace, simple at the surface. As the action is repeated each player will learn the sequences of his part and of the other player. They may negotiate for roles and argue over strategies, but they do not overtly teach each other the actions. They interact, perceive and experience in each other's actions, their part and the part of the other player.

In this supermarket intrigue there are other fascinating dimensions. The response itself demonstrates interest and a scant bit of information that one of the youngsters has gathered about the meaning, the need and role of law enforcement. The location for the scene is not a school but my local supermarket, quite an unremarkable, arbitrary setting in community life. As a seasoned observer of children, I also discover a high degree of involvement, interpersonal competence and some pretty skillful tactics for managing conflict.

The little episode introduces us to children's thinking, their social skills and perceptions. It also provokes us to consider settings in which children travel about as learners.

Episode Two

> In the third grade I got an American Legion citizenship award. They were awarded every semester in each grade.

> One to a boy and one to a girl. I thought then that this was a special thing--even at that age I was overly attached to public, preferably in written, recognitions of merit. I never knew exactly why I got this reward, and as I grew older, I felt it was because I was an orderly, neat, nonagitative, approval-seeking child. I seemed to express these qualities that said I would fit in, accept authority and obey rules. The dilemma of citizenship now is that the most useful, creative, important citizens don't always obey the rules and, in fact, they work to change them, so why did they give me an award for obeying rules? I'm still trying to learn to have enough courage and strength not to when I think I shouldn't. [Wyner, *The Cambridge Study*]

In this anecdote, a producer of a children's television show recalls a memorable citizenship experience. Her reflections inform us of the enduring impact of early experiences and the influence of an award system for conveying values and instructing behavior. Here the school is the location, but who are the teachers? And what should the learner be learning?

Episode Three

> I picked up two kids one night who were sitting in the schoolyard at 12:10 a.m., ages eight and nine, from two different families. They were both high off some type of pill. They told me where they received them. I spent 15 months trying to arrest a 15-year-old pill-pusher and when I did, the court system put him back in the street before I left the courthouse. [Wyner, *The Cambridge Study*]

What about the environment in which children are becoming citizens? What about the experiences of these minors? What are their thoughts in this encounter with the law? What about the police detective who reports this anecdote, a man who is caring, trying to help children?

These two anecdotes were collected during a research project I recently conducted at the Education Development Center. This descriptive study documents a community-based participatory approach involving citizens in defining citizenship education for children. The data generated a stunning perspective on the complexity of citizenship education and the

compelling social forces that are involved in educating children for citizenship (Wyner, *The Cambridge Study*).

The episodes move from the charming and benign to the disordered reality that children and adults face in their everyday lives. Each story is threaded with law-related elements--rules, scraps of information about law enforcement, meanings and values of citizenship, and children's encounters with adult authority.

The law resonates throughout our life experiences. We cannot avoid teaching and learning about law. Nor can we overlook the power of these personal experiences to influence our behaviors and attitudes or the perceptions and behaviors of children. Imprudently, we have looked to the schools as the major institution, along with families, for preparing children for citizenship. But children are thinking, active learners in and out of school, and we must be clear about the limitations of our impact as educators, all the while searching for effective ways to carry out the work of schooling for citizenship. It is our intention in this paper to examine changing orientations in research in order to cultivate our own intuitive and rationally conceived understandings of law-related education for elementary programs. One thing is certain. Teaching about the law is by no means limited to schools and families, nor is it a new idea. Its philosophy, content, and processes preoccupied distinguished curriculum workers like Socrates and Plato in ancient times, as well as the admirable textbook writers of the Bible, the Torah, and the Koran!

INTRODUCTION

Within the scope of this paper we will provide an accounting of salient themes and viewpoints drawn from emerging research in the social and political development of children. There was no attempt to be definitive. Such an effort would have altered our course considerably, limiting discussion of implications and prospects for curricular work. Besides, others have already prepared comprehensive and useful reviews, and some of these listings are included in the Bibliography.

Our scan of the literature is selective, guided by two interests. Awareness of patterns and orientations in current research in social and political development is an important knowledge base, and so it served as a first priority. The information will help us to chart the terrain of social and political development. Secondly, we searched for guiding perspectives that have applicability for curriculum development in law-related education.

In our discussion, we will focus on key ideas in social and political development for early and middle childhood, ages five to twelve, approximately. Implications for curriculum and teaching will be discussed.

BACKGROUNDING

There is remarkably scarce information about the child's understanding of the social and political world. The body of information we do have is work of the last decade. What we have accumulated hardly compares with the research that helps us to understand the child's thinking processes and ways of understanding the physical world. That is rather curious since, as adults, we are so inextricably linked to the child's social and political experiences, one would think that we would know much more. Nevertheless, there are large gaps in our information.

The fifties and sixties were periods for extensive work in political socialization and moral development. Social development emerged in the last ten years. These research traditions overlap and have a deep Piagetian imprint. Piaget helped us to view the natural development of children's conceptions as a structured series of invariant stages. Some orientation about these stages of cognitive development, the egocentrism of childhood, and "decentering" are important to grasp as part of the curriculum-building process. To know something of these key ideas frees one to understand notions of development applied to political, social and moral domains.

Conceptions of thinking in children is partly determined by our understandings of adult conceptions. Yet Piaget theorizes that we

continue to reorganize our world view as we progress through natural states and that therefore the thinking of children is qualitatively different from adults. A brief sketch of developmental stage characteristics clarifies some of these distinctions. For a more thorough grounding in Piaget, curriculum planners should consider an intensive in-service component and readings.

> *Preoperational stage* (approximately two to six years of age). The child moves beyond the sensory stage of infancy to use symbolic language and mental imagery. He/she relates to the observable, the near at hand. Thinking is intuitive, personalized, egocentric. During this phase (heteronomous) rules and authority are external and authoritarian based.
>
> *Concrete operational* (approximately six to twelve years of age). The child develops the capacity for logical-deductive thought and relates to an ordered set of events, grasps history. There is a major shift during this period to a more democratic peer culture.

Social Thinking

Most popular accounts of Piaget focus on his interests in logical-deductive thought and overlook the extent to which he acknowledges the relative contingency of human development on the environment. His view of self-discipline, reciprocity, and the emergence of the moral personality is indicative of his interactionist orientation and his interest in social cognition.

In "The Right to Education in the Present World," an essay of major importance, Piaget discussed the role of authority in the child's development. He theorizes that the child has three spontaneous emotional tendencies. The first two are a need for love and a feeling of fear of those who are bigger and stronger. Unilateral, authoritarian adult behavior is an interplay between these two tendencies--stressing the child's needs and fears, enforcing dependency. Piaget suggests that when the adult expresses respect toward the young child, the child merges the first two emotions into a third, the feeling of obligation--an inner acceptance of rules engendered by the child's response to the person whom he respects, "one who is the object of both affection and fear at the same

time and not only one of these two emotional states." Through these interactions the child moves behond dependence and the concomitant rebellion it inspires to independence and reciprocal relationships characterized by mutual respect, cooperation, and growing self-discipline.

According to Piaget, "Education, founded on authority and only unilateral respect, has the same handicaps from the ethical standpoint as from the intellectual standpoint. Instead of leading the individual to work out the rules and the discipline that will obligate him or to work with others to alter them, it imposes a system of ready-made and immediately categorical imperatives on him."

The educational significance of mutual respect and methods based on the spontaneous social organization of children "is precisely to permit them [children] to work out a discipline where the necessity is discovered in action itself, instead of being received ready-made before being able to be understood . . . to lead the child to construct for himself the tools that will transform him from the inside--that is, in a real sense and not only on the surface" (Piaget, pp. 118-121).

By resorting to mutual respect instead of authority, to reciprocity and obligation, and not external obedience and conformism, we help the child to build a sense of inner confidence "which encourages the development of the moral personality more than any restriction or external punishment" (Piaget).

Are there methods we can develop in classrooms that will enhance mutual respect and promote reciprocity and obligation to support that sense of confidence and consequent social order? What can we teach children within the context of their social world that will help them develop social and political understandings?

Developmental psychologists interested in the social relations children invent for themselves have discovered a Piagetian-oriented sequence of stages for social development. Within this context, Robert Selman's work in social perspectivism and interpersonal awareness stands out as a pioneering effort to discover and describe issues of interpersonal

awareness and the process of social reasoning that prods and nudges social cognition to higher levels of adequacy. Social perspective-taking abilities, according to Selman, are based on the assumption that a child who can undertake another point of view can understand and share the feelings of others by coordinating the viewpoints of self and others through reasoning.

In reviewing research in legal socialization, Tapp lends support to this approach. She observes that "socializing experiences that encourage tolerance for others and incorporate tolerance from others would effectuate greater acceptance of rights in real-life contexts" (Tapp, Psych., p. 380), indicating that law and politically centered issues readily yield to examination through perspective taking and reasoning strategies, and that mutuality and reciprocal thinking evolve through this process.

Selman proposes five levels of perspective taking:

	Level	Description
Ages 4-6	0	Egocentric perspective taking Although the child can identify superficial emotions in other people, he often confuses others' perspective with his own. He does not realize others may see a social situation differently from the way he does. He recognizes there is more than one perspective on a situation, but assumes they are identical.
	1	Subjective perspective taking Child begins to understand that other people's thoughts and feelings may be the same or different from his. He realizes that people feel differently or think differently because they are in different situations or have different information.
	2	Self-reflective perspective taking The child is able to reflect on his own thoughts and feelings. He can anticipate others' perspective on his own thoughts and feelings and realize that this influences his perspective on others. Recognizes reciprocal influences rather than objective assessments.
	3	Mutual perspective taking The child can assume a third-person point of view. He realizes that in a two-person interaction each can put himself in the other's place and view himself from that vantage point before deciding how to react.

Emerges after 8 years	4	Qualitative-system perspective taking The adolescent conceptualizes subjective perspectives of persons toward one another to exist not only on the level of mutual expectations, but also on deeper levels. Perspectives between persons are seen as forming a network or system. There are multiple levels of perspective taking and multiple systems of perspectives.
	5	Symbolic interaction perspective taking Perspective taking is seen as a method for the analysis of interpersonal and social relations. Due to the nature of human subjectivity itself, one does not necessarily "know" the other's perspective as content. Mutual understanding occurs through the use of similar processes of social reasoning.

Perspective-taking levels are intended to describe at given stages the way a child understands social relationships. The paradigm suggests that development occurs through the "exercise" of the child's reasoning and "exposure" to the reasoning of peers. The school setting is regarded as an appropriate place to do these "exercises." Interpersonal and moral reasoning discussion within a group becomes the basis for change and growth in reasoning, since one has to rethink one's own ideas when presented with diverse viewpoints. Guided peer discussions about social and political concepts such as fairness, trust, sharing, the need for rules and laws, and diversity are areas of applicability.

Selman might be thought of as a cartographer whose work in mapping out the contours of interpersonal awareness through perspective taking and reasoning provides a nonrelativistic set of educational goals oriented toward greater adequacy in children's relationships within their social world. In his most recent work, he identifies four domains of relationships--the child's conceptions of persons, friendships, peer groups, and parental/child relationships. He persistently asks how the developmental levels within each of these areas relates to the experiences the child has had in a particular area. For example, he attempts to clarify whether a child's experience of leadership, either as a leader or follower, influences his developing conception of leadership. The following chart offers a useful analysis of the issues and dynamics of social relacionships. The information can be viewed as organizing elements around which we might construct learning experiences (Selman, "Interpersonal Awareness," p. 267).

ISSUES OF INTERPERSONAL AWARENESS RELATED TO CONCEPTIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL, CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS, PEER GROUP ORGANIZATION

INDIVIDUAL	FRIENDSHIP	PEER GROUP
1. SUBJECTIVITY: covert properties of persons (thoughts, feelings, motives); conflicts between thoughts or feelings within the person	1. FORMATION: why (motives) and how (mechanisms) friendships are made; the ideal friend	1. FORMATION: why (motives) and how (mechanisms) groups are formed; the ideal member
2. SELF-REFLECTION: awareness of the self's ability to observe its own thoughts and actions	2. CLOSENESS: types of friendship, ideal friendship, intimacy	2. COHESION/LOYALTY: group unity
3. PERSONALITY: stable or predictive character traits (a shy person, etc.)	3. TRUST: doing things for friends; reciprocity	3. CONFORMITY: range and rationale
4. PERSONALITY CHANGE: how and why people change (growing up, etc.)	4. JEALOUSY: feelings about intrusions into new or established friendships	4. RULES/NORMS: types of rules, and reasons for them
	5. CONFLICTS: how friends resolve problems	5. DECISION-MAKING: setting goals, resolving problems, working together
	6. TERMINATION: how friendships break up	6. LEADERSHIP: qualities, and function to the group
		7. TERMINATION: why groups break up or members are excluded

Selman would like youngsters to become "friendship philosophers" and engage in peer discussions to discover the dimensions and issues of friendship, or reason together about why groups get formed, the types of rules groups need, ways of resolving problems by working together, and so forth. The approach requires that students develop communication skills and learn how to function cooperatively in groups. The setting might be class meetings, peer group discussions, or planned action-oriented activities, but the intention is to stimulate higher levels of social reasoning.

Though still in an early phase of research, Blasi's search for stage characteristic rules of responsibility bears attention. He has conducted structured interviews to determine growth toward independent responsibility. In his research the term "responsibility" is used to define "that relation of necessity that an individual establishes or recognizes between himself and his own action, before the action takes place as well as after it has been performed." In an initial formulation the following developmental sequence is suggested:

1. A move away from literal interpretation of the rules

   (a) Seeing laws in terms of purpose rather than form

   (b) Identifying with the authority's mind and understanding the impossibility of foreseeing every eventuality

   (c) Comparing the relative importance of the purpose in the letter of the law [Loevinger]

Blasi's research may provide important new insights that link responsibility to development, suggesting educaticnal goals that might foster growth in this area.

The developmental theme has also been applied to examining ways in which children form prosocial conceptions and behaviors such as helping, caring, sharing, and cooperation (Mussen, *Roots of Caring*). As we give thought to preparing children to participate in the democratic political process these behaviors seem implicit and fundamental. How do we foster prosocial development? Bryan reports on a number of laboratory investigations concerning practices particularly regarding children's understanding of helping and cooperation. He indicates that "modeling of helping, both verbally and motorically, expressions of affect, group-based rewards, and consistency between moral preachings and practices, to name a few, are probably important antecedents of children's helping and cooperation" (Bryan, p. 42).

Hess and Torney discuss models that help to explain the political socialization process, for example, the Identification Model which "focuses on the way a child copies the behavior of an authority (like a parent)," and the Role Transfer Model that focuses on the way a child takes a role with which he is familiar (as a child in his home, a pupil in his school) and transfers role-appropriate behavior to the political system (as a citizen). The importance of these interactions in schools and classrooms cannot be overemphasized since what is proposed is that the child is actively learning from the informal messages of and cues about the political environment from the informal messages and cues that others model.

Perhaps the most problematic aspect of the modeling process in law and citizenship education is an out-of-focus view of ourselves as socializing agents, adults who are actively modeling, influencing, and contributing to students' perceptions about the political/legal system. In this crucial interaction of teaching and learning, educators often do not think about children's perceptions of authority, the use of power, the management of conflict, etc. Indeed, instead of recognizing our influence, we emphasize *differences* between adults and children and among the children. We seem to have developed an advanced technology for categorizing people, further distancing them from each other--those who have power and those who do not, those who are adult and those who are young, those who are white and those who are nonwhite--*categories based on essential differences*. Commonalities are obscured--the search for a sense of belonging, of mutuality; the need to feel effective and competent; the fear of loss and separation; the meaningfulness of trust; the sharing of common values. A greater emphasis on social interactions, emphasizing at least initially the commonalities of human experience, would put students in touch with a more relevant, more dynamic understanding of the nature of group life as it relates to underlying values of political and legal structures.

The interplay between how children develop social and political conceptions, values, and behaviors through identification and how adults as socializing agents help children to acquire these understandings through modeling is indeed worthy of reflection. Can we help educators to become more conscious of their modeling role? Is modeling an appropriate strategy for teaching basic democratic concepts such as participation and responsibility? What can we learn about children's perceptions of adult roles in the social/political environment? Interest in the power of modeling should lead us to carefully examine the time children have in situations in which they actually observe prosocial, contributing adult citizens. Can we plan law-related learning in which the quality and the quantity of time children spend with real role models--not fictitious people or story-land animals but citizens who are modeling citizenship--is of central importance?

Infusion of the developmental trend in areas of social and political learning is increasingly evident. Although there are many arguments about structuralism, stage sequences, issues of methodology and bias, the credibility of sequential development is growing. International studies provide especially impressive documentation supporting the major effect of age as the significant impact on changing social and political conceptions. Working in this context, Connell and Torney's studies are of particular interest.

Political Thinking

A starting point for an articulated developmental perspective for children's political thinking might well begin with ideas generated by Connell, an Australian psychologist. Working in the late sixties, Connell was interested in how the child builds an interpretive structure about the political world. He conducted Piagetian-type interviews with Australian children and concluded that "children learn about politicians and political events through other people, their contact with politics is indirect . . . they build their attitudes and ideas on adult sources on information already interpreted by adults, rather than by directly manipulating or acting on the physical world" (Connell, *The Child's Construction of Politics*).

According to Connell's research, construction of a political view goes on with continuity from childhood to adolescence. He proposes a sequential process:

To age 7 *Political Prologue:*

The child's capabilities are characterized by:
(a) intuitive thinking,
(b) a lack of synthesizing power,
(c) reality blended with fantasy and misconceptions,
(d) an emerging political consciousness.

Age 7-8 *Development of Political Thought Beyond Intuition:*

Through mastery of factual information the child:

(a) distinguishes political and governmental world from areas of life,

(b) begins to conceptualize about political roles,

(c) develops a highly generalized conception of government with little grasp of political structure or boundaries of political activity,

(d) has rudimentary perceptions of power relationships and awareness of an external world with "special and important" people. [Connell]

A more cohesive and fully realized interpretation is drawn from a cross-cultural study of civic education in ten democratic countries by Torney et al. They describe changes from the "sheltered" view in childhood to a "sophisticated" or realistic view of society in adolescence. These ideas are proposed in a stage-sequenced scheme that the authors indicate is somewhat speculative. Although the cross-cultural study that serves as the data base for shaping the stages was not intended to demonstrate growth from one stage to the next, one would hope that a long-term developmental follow-up will be initiated to reduce cause for speculation. The various patterns that seem evident are organized into *five stages of political socialization*:

Stage 1: Very vague, inarticulate notions, with emergent images of one or two institutions, e.g., the police.

Stage 2: What may be called the "sheltered" view, in which primarily the harmonizing values and processes become established.

Stage 3: An intermediate stage of growing awareness of social conflict, of economic forces, of the UN, of multiple institutional roles, etc. but essentially still with a sheltered orientation.

Stage 4: What has been called the sophisticated or realistic view above, with less stress on fairmindedness and understanding, clear awareness of both the cohesive and divisive functions of many institutions, of overlap between institutional functions, of social bias, low participation, oppressive potential, etc.

Stage 5: Scepticism, a general contempt for institutions and lack of belief in their efficiacy, an emphasis on discordant functions, unfairness and class bias, denial of participation and of improved understanding. [Torney et al., *Civic Education*, pp. 318]

According to the researchers:

> The *sheltered view* includes firmly established patterns of authority and obedience, public safety and crime prevention, freedom of expression, fair shares, improved understanding, and a lack of awareness of social conflict and trials of strength; the *sophisticated view* of society includes both cohesive and divisive functions of institutions, economic conflict and class bias, less fairness and understanding, low participation, and low general efficacy of institutions. In between these two stages children gradually learn to distinguish and articulate the role of institutions more sharply and with greater subtlety, and to tolerate multiple functions; above all, they become aware of broad conflicts and opposing forces in society, and the need to institutionalize these processes. [Torney et al., *Civic Education*, p. 318]

These patterns of political socialization tend to overlap with suggested sequences for interpersonal awareness. Generally, they express an application of Piaget's description of the logic of children's thought. Direct experience and reasoning "exercises" related to the social/political concepts clustered in the proposed sequences provide some of the dynamics that stimulate the child's thinking processes.

Reasoning is also an important aspect of legal socialization. As defined by Tapp and Levine, legal reasoning "is characterized by a changing conception of rights and roles vis-à-vis authoritative rule systems." They argue that the goal of legal education is "to attain a basic comprehension of substantive law and legal process"; and, that the role of legal socializers as protagonists in legal education is to "encourage expression and independence rather than repression and dependence, so that ultimately the individual can develop reasoning principles well-suited to analyzing complex problems and integrating diverse viewpoints" (Tapp and Levine, "Legal Socialization," p. 4).

The reader might be reasonably distressed by the proliferation of viewpoints that propose stages of development. In social cognition we have referred to interpersonal, political and legal territories, and one can point to stages in representational ability, and so forth. How can we conduct our teaching responsibilities through this complex terrain if

developmental levels are varied and yet interrelated within an individual child and among children? Do these fixed schemes or stages grasp the shifting, dynamic and unique aspects of human behavior? Since children's work and their thinking capabilities are different from adults' it must be viewed in a developmental context. However, the principles that govern analysis of developmental sequences must be broadly based, recognizing the interactive nature of learning and the *processes* that lead the child to self-awareness and adult behavior.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

The Developmental Perspective

A strong developmental perspective characterizes emerging research on children's social and political thinking. The ideas are shaped, in large part, by a cognitive-developmental typology that charts out sequential stages and the interactive nature of learning. The child is seen as actively struggling to make sense of his/her own social/political world in accordance with a logic that is qualitatively different from adults. The paradigms discussed suggest that we can more reasonably estimate the age at which socially/politically oriented instructional strategies can effectively mediate growth tasks. The role of the educator, then, in promoting social and political thinking is to stimulate the natural course of development by helping to organize and construct meaningful, appropriate growth tasks. Principles in design and planning should include:

- Approaches that acknowledge that the "social" and "political" worlds of children and the relationships and issues within these natural groups as the medium for children's thinking and learning about the needs, values, and underlying structures of people coexisting as community and society. Selman's work suggests curricular attention focus on the sociopolitical issues of friendships, peer group organizations, and family groups and the inherent issues of these social units (conflict, decision making, etc.). These approaches must recognize that children's thinking is extended and nourished by situations in which they are directly involved, that they are cognitively stimulated by real-life experiences. Fictional, dilemma-type

situations, simulations and readings in children's literature are extremely important sources for information, and often provide a chance for students to exercise their growing capabilities. But these activities cannot replace the significance of "real life" as a context for learning.

- Approaches in curriculum and teaching should include techniques that can help children gain more generalized conceptions of group life. Guided peer-group discussions that encourage reasoning seem to have the potential for stimulating interpersonal and political awareness. Communication and participation skills are developed in these peer-group experiences as part of the reasoning process--involving children in expressing viewpoints, listening to each other, etc. These competencies are identified more specifically in a later section of this article. Peer-group discussions emerge as a *central* instructional technique.

- Approaches in curriculum and teaching should include opportunities for children to interact and identify with adult models who can persuade the child's self-esteem and social values. We tend to underestimate the potent influence teachers and other adult socializers have on children's perceptions of authority, cooperative behaviors, and social values. We also tend to overlook the child's need to share in the positive emotional states of models whom they believe possess strengths and competencies which they struggle to achieve. The interactive nature of learning argues that ways of relating to children are ways of teaching.

Teachers, however, are only one of the educators in the child's social/political world. Learning must include opportunities for children to talk with and observe other adult socializers engaged in citizen roles--rule makers, law enforcers, community people helping to create a working community. Children need direct experience in the political settings of community life and with those adults who value their roles as citizens. Reenactment, reconstruction of these experiences through role play, gaming, simulation, creative drama, and reading in children's literature are important instructional strategies that enrich and clarify these experiences, helping the child toward a more competent, "sophisticated" and conceptual grasp of society.

Teachers and the Mini-Legal System of the Classroom

People who describe the complex process of American children's political development argue that the political/legal dynamics of the classroom have an important impact on the child's perceptions of the adult political world. It is also apparent that there is increasing interest in processes and interactions that educate. The implication we might draw, then, is that we consciously examine the issues and interactions of the classroom perceived as a mini-legal system. Potentially our purpose is to uncover some of the political/legal characteristics of the classroom for curriculum planning, striving toward more deliberate, conscious use of the classroom setting for politically-centered learning. We might consider our strategy as an informal extension of Selman's conceptions of issues relating to friendships, peer-group organizations, etc. This approach is concerned with increasing political awareness in the context of the mini-legal system of the classroom.

When teachers decide what classroom resources are communal property, they teach about sharing, ownership and property rights; when teachers select pictures with faces of white and nonwhite children and display them on classroom bulletin boards, they are teaching about diversity. When principals and teachers make all the school rules and impose collective punishment or otherwise unfair restrictions on students, they teach about a political process and control.

An analytic framework is proposed that draws on highly generalized characteristics of our legal/political environment. Discussions involving reasoning about the mini-legal systems of schools and classrooms can stimulate a more expanded view of the political nature of the schooling environment.

Characteristics	Some possible responses
People--active, thinking, feeling people in- and outside the system	• Learning, changing, influencing others, developing expectations • Alienated, creating conflict • Controlling, enforcing

- Creating new ideas, resolving social problems
- Protecting

Structures

- In terms of space and human behaviors:
  (a) boundaries (i.e., classrooms, schools, neighborhoods, courtrooms, nation)
  (b) mechanisms or procedures--the constitutional framework: discussion, decision making, due process, appeal or repression, authoritarian control

Potential issues

- An evolving interpretation of the constitutional framework
- Continuing search to uncover and support group values
- Stimulation of a rights-consciousness and legal/political/social competence including coexistence and independent responsibility
- Challenges and threats to constitutional rights of members, i.e.:
  (a) group punishment for behavior of individuals and unfair punishment of individuals
  (b) misuse of authority/power
  (c) racism, sexism, inequities that limit full participation

As I used this model in law-related education workshops to encourage reasoning and discussion about political processes in classrooms, I found that teachers and administrators often referred to the enforcing, punishing, and controlling nature of legal systems, even though participants could later point to many instances in which laws were perceived as protective safeguards! Reasoning can bring about a more divergent view of the legal process, especially if one begins this approach by actively investigating all of the responses people have observed within the realm

of their own experience. Inherent in this model is an underlying assumption that adult socializers--especially teachers--need to recognize the school as a political environment before they can comfortably discuss these issues with children.

Children Thinking about Authority and Power

Authority and the use of power are important components in political, social learning. We tend to think of power as an adult issue, an evil theme, yet it is the essence and the dynamic underpinning of group life. Indeed, supportive authority is an essential ingredient in the experience of children becoming citizens, moving them, as Piaget indicates, toward self-discipline, mutual respect, and feelings of obligation.

Is authority and power a suitable topic for children to discuss and reason about? Only if we assume that they know nothing about power. Ask them. They know about presidents and police, they know about bullies and bosses. Can we teach children that power is a way of contributing to group life? Can we teach them that what you need to be a competent learner and a responsible person is power? That using your powers in coexisting and getting along is what we value more than battling and bullying; that racism and sexism are ways of using power but so is learning to live with diversity?

Issues of National Civic Identity

Law-related education is a keystone of citizen development, and its focus on understanding laws, political processes and values is a basis on which we build a sense of national civic identity--a collective conception of national history and the knowledge and appreciation of shared values, principles, and national symbols. Though there is remarkably little attention to issues of national civic identity, it is appropriately within the realm of political/social thinking and the socialization process. Our practices here remain obscure and inconsistent.

Perhaps one of the most stressful and complex issues in this context is our approach to teaching children about the flag of the United States

and the rituals and rules that surround related classroom activities of "The Pledge of Allegiance." Within the context of law-related education there are objective, sound, rational alternatives that can help students and educators to evolve a suitable contemporary instructional plan for teaching about national symbols of civic identity. President Woodrow Wilson sets forth the problem in the following quotation: "This flag which we honor and under which we serve, is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours."

In classrooms throughout the country children are required by law to state "The Pledge of Allegiance" and salute the flag. And yet many of these youngsters haven't the vaguest notion of the meaning of the words they mouth. Nor do they have opportunity to discuss the historical significance of the United States flag as a truly national flag representing all of our citizens.

A conceptual approach to the study of flags, the concept of "flagness" would help children to balance their symbolic experiences with cognitive learning. In studying about "flagness," children might: (1) reason about why people use flags; (2) discuss chief characteristics in the design of the United States flag and other flags; (3) study the changing history of the symbols and what they represent in the design of the U.S. flag and others; (4) develop understandings of the hugely complex vocabulary of "flagness" like salute, pledge, etc.; (5) develop a reasoned understanding of the meaningfulness of flags in our history and in the history of the world community; and (6) learn about laws that determine the care and use of the U.S. flag. We are engaged in a good deal of "hidden" teaching when we avoid discussion of this important symbol of our national civic culture and need, I believe, to acknowledge, that the colorful variety of flags and symbols often presented to children at public occasions are testimony to the diversity of our cultural heritage and the freedom of expression within our political system.

An Initial Set of Competencies Suggested by the Research and Teaching Practice

Throughout, we talked about stages of development, levels of adequacy, and the importance of using group interaction processes for nudging and stimulating growth in social and political thinking. Guided by the research discussed in this paper and earlier writings, I have identified a preliminary set of competencies that are perhaps best thought of as guideposts for curricular planning. They should be rigorously discussed and argued about. Perhaps we might call that process curricular reasoning.

Citizen competencies develop as the child:

Engages in thinking and reasoning and interacts with adults and peers and:

Early childhood:	Begins to identify emotions in other people
	Actively listens to what another person thinks, feels, intends
	Collects accurate information, begins to organize it systematically
	Communicates own viewpoint to another person and in a group context
	Learns to take turns talking and listening, sharing and helping
	Shares ideas, feelings through language and symbolic representation
	Clarifies misconceptions through questioning, observing, comparing with accurate information
	Recognizes there is more than one point of view than his/her own, though they are assumed to be identical (a basic stage of perspective building and role taking.
	Develops personal sense of helping, cooperation, participation, interdependence
Middle childhood:	Communicates reasons for his/her ideas, feelings to others in a group context, or in one-to-one relationships
	Understands the importance of having accurate information
	Begins to understand other people's thoughts and feelings are different from one's own

Recognizes that different people have different experiences, information, interests, needs, yet acknowledges commonalities as well

Reflects on his/her own thoughts, feelings, behavior

Recognizes reciprocal influences people have on each other's thoughts, feelings and behavior

Can assume a viewpoint other than his/her own and views self from that vantage point, "putting himself in someone else's shoes," gaining a sense of the mutuality of roles

Demonstrates increasing awareness of the rights, needs, feelings of self and others and takes reponsibility for promoting these rights, etc.

Participates cooperatively as a result of productive, satisfying group experiences and social collaboration

Can alter behavior to achieve and promote more effective interpersonal relationships

Engages in social/political interactions and:

Early childhood: Becomes aware of rules as a way of establishing boundaries, insuring personal safety, protecting group life

Begins to understand the need for rules, laws and the processes for democratically making-changing rules/laws in the group life of the classroom, local settings

Develops an increasing degree of personal freedom and self-discipline based on a reasoned approach to making choices, determining personal values, learning limits set by supportive authority

Is knowledgeable about symbols of national civic identity (i.e., flag, anthem, pledge) and is aware of national symbols of other world communities

Demonstrates increasing awareness and understanding of basic concepts of citizenship, for example, cooperation, fairness, authority, participation, pluralism, freedom, governance, social responsibility, equity and interdependence

Participates in groups discussing social-political issues, developing a sense of competence about oneself as a member of groups

Is knowledgeable about roles and responsibilities of leaders and authorities (a president, mayor, police officer, teacher, principal, parent)

Demonstrates competencies in leadership roles among peers, increasingly knowledgeable and able to use democratic processes, i.e., open-group discussion, due process, decision-making strategies (consensus, voting)

Demonstrates increasingly responsibility for achieving one's own rights and the rights and needs of others through the active application of knowledge, competencies, personal values

Middle childhood: Distinguishes the political and governmental world from other areas of life and has knowledge of the general purpose and functions of government

Is conversant with major documents of our constitutional democracy (Bill of Rights, Constitution) and begins to compare their principles with the political orientation of other nations in the world--building toward a global perspective

Understands the facts and principles of our two-party political system and its importance in the growth of democracy

Is increasingly knowledgeable about citizen-oriented subject matter, for example, poverty, racism, environmental protection, scarcity of resource, conflict, global interdependence, and can apply due process for conflict and resolution

Demonstrates a reasoned approach to conflict situations and can apply due process for conflict management, planning and advocacy techniques for constructive change

Shows ability to postpone immediate solutions in view of long-range consequences [Wyner, "On Becoming a Citizen"]

CONCLUSION

Summarizing an international study in civic education, authors Torney et al. observe:

> The ideal goal may be a well informed citizenry, supportive of democratic values, basically supportive of and capable of influencing government policy, and interested in participating in civic activities. Our data show that these four aspects of good citizenship not only are independent but are influenced by different practices or in some cases are influenced in different directions by the

> same practice. The recognition of the interdependence of these systems of socialization is critical to our understanding of the process. Tinkering with a new course here or setting up a new educational requirement for teachers there is unlikely to produce significant movement toward an ideal citizenry in any country. [Torney et al., *Civic Education*, p. 336]

I share the concern for "tinkering" and know the comfort that would come from defining a specific set of practices, a "basic" kit, a discrete listing of strategies to achieve our goals. But perhaps the vitality and growing energy of the law and citizenship education movement is indicative of a commitment to a broadly conceived response to complex educational issues and an awareness of the challenging, difficult task ahead.

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